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to a dangerous and untenable doctrine. Whatever may be the case with the confused enthusiasts of the Workers' and Soldiers' Committee, Englishmen are not shedding their blood (nor, for that matter, are the majority of Americans prepared to do so) to make democracy, or any other political system, prevail either in Germany or elsewhere. They are fighting, in the first place, in order to defend themselves and their Allies against an attack which menaces their existence; secondly, to exact punishment and reparation for intolerable wrongs. The Minister or the President who sacrificed lives by the hundred thousand for any abstract cause, however lofty or noble, would deserve to be sent to the scaffold, as Britons and Americans would admit if the issue were clearly placed before them in that form. We went to war because Germany invaded Belgium, attacked France, and threatened our own security; the United States

went to war because their citizens were denied the freedom to convey themselves and their goods across the high seas in safety. Our specific objects will have been achieved when we shall have compelled Germany to make retribution for these injuries and obtained guarantees against their repetition. And our claim against the German nation would not be weakened by one iota if it were to reform its constitution on the fullest lines of responsible or republican government. Very likely it will pretend to do so when it sees that the military and U-boat game is up and finds itself compelled to ask for peace, and thereby it might set a very awkward trap for the Allied negotiators if they keep on insisting that the Hohenzollerns and the Hapsburgs are their real enemies, and that they are only too anxious to clasp the deluded subjects of those aggressive monarchs in a fraternal and democratic embrace.—*The Saturday Review, London.*

MELPOMENE AND THALIA

By LE BONHOMME CHRYSALE

NATURE, indifferent to the horrors of war, tranquilly brings to us the flowers of Spring and the grapes of Autumn. Similarly each season brings certain manifestations of social life which no catastrophe interrupts. In the months of June and July, the "class-day" of the Conservatory takes place. For good reasons there are no longer many young men in the school of the *rue de Madrid*, but young girls flock there. No one can blame them for pursuing the studies which will enable them to earn their living. Formerly the newspapers, by an unbridled publicity, excited the vanity of students. During the past three years this condition has changed. The examinations take place before a restricted audience, and these scholars, no longer

changed into phenomena by an excess of publicity, become really interesting. Impatient to achieve success, they make great efforts. You cannot imagine what passion and ardor they display in the course of lessons given them by masters as zealous, as impassioned as themselves.

The public is not admitted to these classes. I was, however, allowed one day to be present at one of them. The professor, no longer living, who consented to work before me, was a rather mediocre practitioner of the art that he taught. The gods had denied to him the greater part of the gifts which would have permitted him to shine in it, allowing him only that of loving and understanding it. He had a dull face, a discordant voice, and al-

though his acting was totally without vivacity, the nose of a comedian. He was scarcely even pathetic in tragedy, and in comedy he was funereal. But this bad actor had a genius for teaching. And so, convinced of his mission, he did not profess, he officiated. Continually his gravity was tempered by graces of language. I see him yet, explaining to a sixteen-year-old ingénue the scene in "Demi-Monde," where Marcelle, uneasy about Oliver de Jalin and suspecting that he was going to fight a duel, drew from him the secret which he tried vainly to conceal and finally confessed to him the love which filled her heart.

"My child," said he, "before attacking this scene, you should comprehend its spirit. It has three phases which, developing logically, constitute its action. First phase: Marcelle wishes to know if Oliver is going to fight; second phase: she wishes to prevent the duel; third phase: not succeeding and guessing that Oliver remains inflexible, she implores. . . Try to think all that over, and put yourself in these different states of mind."

"What is your thought on entering Oliver's room? It is this: Thank God, I am in time! The phrase is in the situation if not in the text. You need not say it, since the author has not written it. It is indispensable, however, that you give the sense of it. The public will read it in your expression, in your appearance. . . Come! Begin again. . . Anxiety now—feverishness, have an appearance of anguish!"

The pretty blonde frowned, her hands trembled convulsively.

"Not too much, my child! With moderation! not too fast!"

The worthy man! Brought up in the theatre, he ignored none of its traditions.

He initiated his disciples in the little tricks of the profession.

"Now, my child, be careful with the scene of the declaration. That is essential. You await your lover, you understand. . . the one whom you love more than any one on earth. He does not come. You are uneasy. You take a step forward, like this. Your breast is softly agitated like this. . . Good! the mouth in the form of an O, a little o . . . Show your little teeth . . not all of them. . . the front ones. . . Suggest a smile, like this . . . You see I suggest it merely . . . Extend your arms . . . very good!"

While he talked I was struck by the facility with which the young girl adopted his suggestion; she made several remarks which showed some cultivation. She was evidently of good family, and not born in a janitor's cellar.

The legend of Madame Gibou conducting her heiress to the conservatoire is no longer in fashion. In these days middle-class families, especially when they are ruined, have no objection to giving to the theatre a Bartel or a Réjane. The professors are glad of this change which makes their task so much easier; they sow in better prepared soil. But it is hard work all the same.

And tomorrow the great battle will be on. Young women in muslin shout the furies of Hermione. Frizzed adolescents apostrophize the ministers of Ruy Blas. And we shall have the scene from "Demi-Monde." And we shall see again Perdican, Célimène and the inevitable Scapin, and the eternal Rosine. And they will protest against the decisions of the jury. And the president will ring his little bell. . . Cannons roar, blood flows. . . The universe trembles. Life goes on.

—*Les Annales, Paris.*